

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The method for identity verification employs biometric technology. Positioned at the center of the system is a stylus with any of a number of biometric properties or their combination or with one or more metric sensors, while the customer uses the stylus to sign his/her name, or even for writing anything. The identity verification system is used at point-of-sale terminals, in various closed environments, to access a computer network, in applications involving pen-based computers and smart-pens, and for e-commerce. When fingerprint sensors are used, the sensors are positioned in the stylus grip, one sensor for the index finger, and a second sensor for the thumb. In one variation, one-to-one biometric matching is used. Each participant carries on his/her person a device that includes an encrypted biometric for reference purposes to gain access into the system. Processing is simplified since the system need only make a "MATCH" or "NO MATCH" decision. In a second variation that is particularly useful in closed environments, one-to-many biometric matching is used. During each event access request, the community of reference prints is searched for a match with the applicant. Each member of the community need carry nothing on his/her person to participate in the system. In either variation, the stylus is either attached to each site or is portable, one such stylus being carried by each participant.